

Intercultural AI Creative Starter Pack

An account of a brainstorming session between Malik Afegbua, Hannah Andrews, Luba Elliott, Oscar Ekponimo, Barbara Khaliyesa Minishi, June Kim, and Doreen Ríos

***These ideas come from a group of artists, curators, and cultural managers who shared their experiences and knowledge around AI during a four-hour discussion. This session was part of the program [“Creating Futures: Art and AI for Tomorrow’s Narratives”](#) at Salzburg Global Seminar.*

Our brainstorming began with defining artificial intelligence (AI). We gathered ideas from various resources we’ve found useful over time, starting with the earliest definitions of AI and extending to contemporary critical perspectives on these technologies in 2024.

We collected the following ideas:

- “the science and engineering of making intelligent machines” (McCarthy, 1956)
- “...technology that allows computers and machines to simulate human intelligence and problem solving tasks” (Investopedia, 2024)
- “(...) AI is constituted not by the imitation of biological intelligence but by the intelligence of labour and social relations.” (Pasquinelli, 2023)
- “the critical research on foundation models will require deep interdisciplinary collaboration commensurate with their fundamentally socio-technical nature.” (Stanford, 2021)

While many countries use the English version of AI, others have been sticking firmly with the local abbreviation, such as KI in German (for “Künstliche Intelligenz”) or IA in French (“L’intelligence artificielle”) and Spanish (“Inteligencia Artificial”). In Japanese, “AI” can mean love or affection (愛) or indigo (藍). In Chinese, “AI” is a common given name for females and can also be a male name, written as “爱/愛” or “艾” among other characters. It can mean love or affection (愛) or mugwort (艾) Meanwhile, in Korean, 인공지능 (AI)

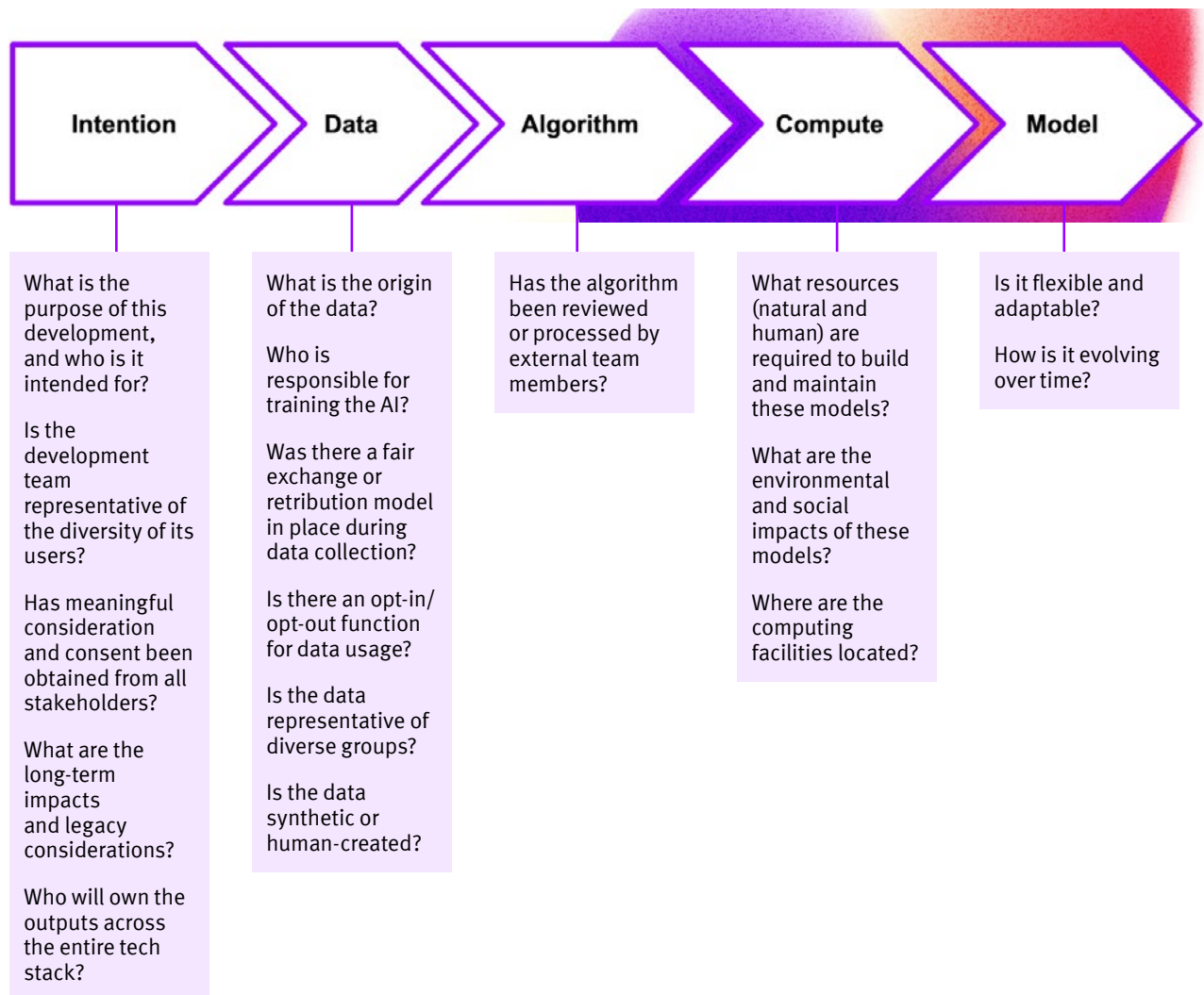
refers to the field of computer science that deals with solving cognitive problems typically associated with human intelligence, such as learning, creativity, and image recognition. And so on.

Given the challenges presented in defining what AI is (and does) for various communities, we moved into acknowledging them and making a case for what “intercultural AI” might mean for us as a group conformed by agents from Nigeria, South Korea, Kenya, Mexico, and the United Kingdom. We defined “intercultural AI” as the development of frameworks that allow flexible representation of diverse cultures across elements of the AI tech stack and functional interoperability between resulting distinct culturally or geographically bound technical applications. An initial list of key elements to consider while thinking about what intercultural AI could be include:

- **Inclusive:** Incorporation of attributes and perspectives in the data, process, system, and governance of the AI ecosystem.
- **Diverse:** Intrinsically varied in its approach of serving intended audiences while recognizing the composition of a group and the representations of individuals in it.
- **Horizontal:** Cross functional with equal power balance in its utilization.
- **Accurate:** Without cultural biases but more specific and precise.
- **Accessible:** Without barriers and limitation to utilization, whether sociological or technological.
- **Open Source:** Freely accessible knowledge base and modifiable source code, that fosters a collaborative environment for producers, developers, and artists to utilize and distribute license-free AI tools and products.

Apart from the challenge of language that we traced out in the first part of our brainstorming, we also identified other challenges, such as how to deal with the diverse meanings that words can carry, the structure and order of language, the normative understanding of a subject and the pre-existing encoded bias(es) it might carry, and the increasing input of synthetic data.

With this in mind, we developed a **general** workflow for creating AI systems, including diffusion models, GANs, deep learning, and LLMs. We also identified essential questions to ask at each phase of development.



Without aiming to oversimplify the complexities of the development and use of AI models in the context of creativity, we found it essential to summon the voices of other agents who have dedicated their work, research, and practice to unpack some of the questions that we shared as a group. To do so, we compiled a list of resources that have helped shape our understanding of AI and that we consider important to bring into the program for discussion.

These resources include:

- [AI Tech Stack \(Future Art Ecosystems, Serpentine Galleries, 2024\)](#)
- [Cartography of generative AI \(Estampa, 2024\)](#)
- [Anatomy of an AI System \(Kate Crawford, Vladan Joler, 2018\)](#)
- [La Máquina Estética \(Manuel Felguérez, Mayer Sasson, 1983\)](#)
- [Platformisation: Around, Inbetween and Through \(Ed. Aarti Sunder, 2023\)](#)
- [The Gig Economy \(Mark Graham, 2022\)](#)

- [Data Governance for Generative AI \(2023\)](#)
- [Artificial Intelligence Revolution in Africa: Economic Opportunities and Legal Challenges \(2023\)](#)
- [Participatory Research for Low-resourced Machine Translation: A Case Study in African Languages \(Oct 2020\), \(Nekoto et al, 2020\)](#)
- [Whose Global Village?: Rethinking how technology shapes our world. \(Srinivasan, 2017\).](#)
- [Indigenous Data Sovereignty Principles for the Governance of Indigenous Data Workshop \(The CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance, 2019\)](#)
- [African AI Art: Transforming the African Art Landscape and Revolutionizing African Artistic Expression \(African Digital Art, 2024\)](#)
- [Origins of Artificial Intelligence \(Manuel de Landa, 2023\)](#)
- [Synthetic Intelligence \(Antikythera, 2023\)](#)
- [Data Governance for Generative AI \(Spawning AI, 2023\)](#)
- [Have I Been Trained? \(Spawning AI, 2023\)](#)
- [Processing \(NLP\) of Ghanaian Languages & it's Applications to Local Problems \(Ghana Natural Language Processing, 2023\)](#)

Additionally, we put together a list of case studies that have inspired and informed our practice and who have sought to reveal the vulnerabilities of AI, counter-engineer its intended uses, and even rewire these technologies by creating their own models.

These case studies include:

VIDEO

- [Autoconstrucción, Malitzin Cortés](#)
- [Unnatural Selection, Anni Garza Lau](#)
- [They/Them, Juan Obando](#)
- [Ana Min Wein?, Nouf Aljowaysir](#)
- [Prólogo para la Acción Fantasma, Ghost Agency](#)
- [Layers of Perception, Memo Akten](#)
- [Glenfiddich Grand Yokazura, Slickcity Media](#)
- [DZATA, Francois Knoetze, Amy Louise Wilson, and Russel Hlongwane](#)

SOUND

- [Aire, Interspecifics](#)
- [SOMA, Jaime Lobato](#)
- [Semilla AI, Moisés Horta](#)
- [Recurring Morphing Radio, Interspecifics](#)

STILL IMAGE

- [Miniature, Canek Zapata](#)
- [Neural Zoo, Sofía Crespo](#)
- [Self-contained, Entangled Others](#)
- [Elders Series, Malik Afegbua](#)
- [Interviews of Silence](#)

OTHERS

- [Unseen Garden, Federico Pérez Villoro](#)
- [Blind Camera, Diego Trujillo Pisanty](#)

Overall, our working group focused on sharing ideas, questions, intuitions, and resources that have significantly influenced our understanding of artificial intelligence in the context of creative production. It is important to note that these ideas are not a finalized work nor a comprehensive representation of the AI field. Instead, they are intended to be seen as a work in progress or a beta state discussion captured at a specific moment in time.